



OPENING OF THE
IOWA BUILDING,
COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO,
MAY 1, 1893.

ADDRESS 

BY

Hon. W. M. McFarland

AT THE

COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO,

FORMAL OPENING

OF THE

IOWA BUILDING

MAY 1, 1893.

OPENING ADDRESS.

In response to a brief address by President Crosby, who in behalf of the Iowa Commissioners, presented the Iowa Building to Secretary McFarland, to be formally opened to the public. Mr. McFarland spoke as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE
IOWA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN:

I N receiving this beautiful building and its magnificent exhibits, at the hands of your President, for the purpose of formally throwing it open to the inspection of the people of the world, I do so fully realizing the importance of the act as affecting the great state of Iowa. It is by this building and its exhibits that we are to be judged. So far as the world is concerned, we are now about to unveil the evidences of our material resources; of our material growth and prosperity. More than this: We are now about to present the evidence by which our civilization will be estimated, and measured by the

people of the world. Thanks to the intelligence, energy, and untiring labor of our Iowa Board of Commissioners, the evidence we are about to submit will not dishonor Iowa. I need not enlarge upon what you see before you. Iowa will be justly proud of her building and its exhibits. We have here a great object lesson. An object lesson that will impress upon the minds of the people of this country and all nations, that, beyond the Mississippi river exists a commonwealth rich in all the elements of material greatness, that that Commonwealth is the home of two and one half millions of happy, prosperous people, rich in the sentiments, attainments and culture that constitute the highest civilization of the race.

But exhibits at best are but partial. Samples necessarily illustrate but a few important facts. To represent the full measure of Iowa's greatness by these exhibits here, would be paralleled by an attempt to illustrate a great piece of masonry by a sample stone. The commissioners have collected here sample

products of Iowa farms, unexcelled in this or any other nation; but this does not tell you that Iowa has thirty-five million acres of land, as rich in soil as was ever fertilized by God's sunlight and rain, and that eight million acres of that land is virgin soil untouched by the hand of husbandry.

It does not tell you that in 1892, Iowa farms gave to the wealth of the world over four hundred million dollars in value. It does not tell you in express language at least, that the Iowa farmer is annually adding to his store of gains; annually adding to the pleasures and comforts of his home; annually surrounding that home by all the higher tokens of civilized life. Neither does it tell you that seventy-five million dollars of the surplus deposits in the nine hundred Iowa banks are there as a guarantee that the homes of the Iowa farmer are not to be destitute.

The Commission has also collected here samples of the Educational work of our public schools; but these do not tell you that the ninety-nine counties of Iowa are

decorated by fourteen thousand school buildings, in which twenty-two thousand teachers are presiding over nearly six hundred thousand children. And this does not include the vast army of pupils under instruction at our Universities, Colleges, Academies, Normal, Parochial and other private schools.

Neither do these exhibits tell you that Iowa stands first among the Commonwealths and Nations of the world in point of average intelligence, our per cent of illiteracy being but a little more than one per cent of our entire population. Neither do you learn from these exhibits that any five pupils of school age anywhere in the State, who may be inconveniently located as to schools, by application properly made, may have a school building erected and a teacher furnished for their education. And yet our school fund is in excess of the demands of this most munificent system of our State Government, which expends more than seven million dollars annually upon our public schools.

Our State does not pretend to compete

with the older states in bulk of manufactured goods, and yet, we have millions of dollars profitably invested in the various industries other than husbandry, which employes in the aggregate over one hundred and thirty thousand laborers at an average annual wage in excess of that paid in this or any other country. Our mines in 1892 yielded an output valued at over ten million dollars, the valuation being based upon one dollar and forty cents per ton at the mine, over eight million of this amount being paid direct to labor. Our water power is vastly superior to that of many of our great manufacturing states, and our fuel is not only easy of access and cheap, but almost inexhaustible, while the raw material for the mill, the loom, the shop, and canning establishment is abundant in every county, thus offering conditions to the manufacturer that will inevitably make of Iowa a busy manufacturing center at no distant date.

Our transportation facilities are represented by a little less than nine thousand miles of railroad, safely ballasted and ad-

mirably equipped to meet the highest demands of that kind of transportation. This enormous mileage is so dispursed over the State as to form a complete net work of lines touching every town and village that makes any pretense of being a market. The management of this vast system is under intelligent and honest control, giving a rate of transportation that in the main is fair and just, and that enables every industry within the borders of the State to successfully compete with like industries elsewhere. This has inaugurated an era of good feeling and good understanding between the people and the transportation companies that now promises to be lasting and mutually beneficial to all interests.

It is proper to say here, that thirty thousand of the best paid laborers in our State are in the employ of these railroad lines.

The great Mississippi river on our East border, and the Missouri on our West, adds greatly to our transportation facilities and opens a cheap roadway to the Atlantic

ocean, to the value of which each year adds unmistakable evidence, and which roadway is accessible to every section of our state.

Iowa is located between the fortieth and the forty fourth degrees of North Latitude and will profitably produce all of the products common to the Temperate zone. It is the native home of all the valuable tame grasses, such as Blue Grass, Timothy, and the various clovers, which are universally produced with great profit both as hay and pasture. We have the natural soil and climate for that great cereal, Indian Corn, which gives a yield unexcelled elsewhere, and responds to intelligent husbandry with wonderfully gratifying profits. The same is substantially true of Oats, Rye, Barley, and in the North, Wheat and Flax, the latter being enormously profitable. But, I need not go into further details. Our Dairy interests employs more cows than that of any state in the Union, save New York; but in the production of cattle in general, we excelled New York by one

million head in 1892, and was excelled by only one state, Texas, in point of numbers, but not in value, while we excelled all other States in both number produced and value of product. We excelled in 1892, the combined cattle product of Illinois and Indiana as to both numbers and value. We also the same year equalled in numbers and value, the combined product of Ohio, Missouri and North Dakota; also the combined product of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, New Mexico and South Dakota; also nearly equalled the combined product of Kansas and Nebraska.

During the same year we excelled all other States in the production of horses save Illinois, which excelled us but by a few thousand. We excelled the combined product of Ohio and New York; also Missouri and Minnesota; also Nebraska North and South Dakota; also nearly equalled the combined product of Wisconsin, Michigan and Kentucky.

We raised more swine in 1892, than any state in the union, our nearest rival,

Illinois, falling behind fifteen million head, while we exceeded the combined product of New York, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota by three million head.

The same year we produced more Indian Corn than any state in the union. Ninety-seven million bushels more than Indiana; twenty million more than Illinois; Over forty million more than either Kansas, Nebraska, or Missouri; and an amount equal to the combined product of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York.

In the production of oats we are able to make as favorable a showing as in corn. Comparing with the oat producing states, in 1892, we find that we produced twenty million bushels more than Illinois, sixty-six millions more than Indiana, forty-one millions more than Kansas, fifty-two millions more than Nebraska, seventy-one millions more than Missouri, fifty-two millions more than Minnesota, forty-five millions more than Wisconsin, sixty-eight millions more than Michigan, and

two million more than the combined yield of New York Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

In the production of barley, rye, wheat, and flax, we can make a comparative showing, that will almost equal the foregoing, while our hay crop is comparatively as good as any crop we produce. With the exception of a very few kinds adapted to the latitudes south of us, our whole line of vegetable products are unexcelled by any state in the union.

The comparisons above made, are with states the most closely rivaling us in the products under consideration, many of which greatly exceed us in extent of territory and number of population. Figures are generally dry and uninspiring, but to an Iowan, these figures are not only full of interest, but charged with eloquence, demonstrating as they do, that our thirty-five million acres of land are unexcelled, for the general purposes of agriculture, by any other equal body of land in the world.

The vital statistics of 1892 give us

second place as to health, and, we have less criminals per capita than any other state.

Our winter climate, we must confess, is a little rigorous, but, being dry and invigorating, is for that reason more favorable to the support of animal life at a minimum expenditure of vitalizing food than the damper but milder climate of latitudes south, while our Springs, Summers, and Autumns, are unrivaled for pleasant temperature and healthfulness.

We live also within the zone of greatest human activity. Removed to any considerable distance, either north or south, life becomes less active and vigorous and human powers, mental and physical, suffer degeneration.

In short, Iowa loved and honored by its citizens, is a commonwealth in which the sturdier virtues of manhood are developed and in which enterprise and honest toil meet a full measure of reward. It is not a haven for the sluggard, and our broad prairies are not congenial

homes for the criminal classes.

Our people are earnestly attached to republican institutions and are loyal supporters of law, and we guarantee to the honest and industrious citizen, who seeks a home with us, the rights and blessings of a republican form of government, in its purest and simplest form, and unparalleled returns for thrift, enterprise and toil. Only upon this basis, do we invite citizenship. Upon this basis, we know no nation, no race, no color, no condition, believing as we do in the eternal fatherhood of God, and its corollary the universal brotherhood of man.

With it all, we must not forget that less than fifty years ago Iowa that now occupies such a proud position in the galaxy of states was carved from a practically unknown country. We can easily imagine that the gentle poet may have stood on the banks of the Mississippi river at that time, and, with his ear bent to catch the faint rumbling of the oncoming tide of immigration, was inspired to write:

“I hear the tread of pioneers of Nations yet to be,
The first low splash of waves that soon shall roll
a human sea.

We have heard the tread of pioneers; the first low splash of waves, and we have seen it roll a human sea of immigration till the very miracle of transformation has been wrought before our eyes. During this transformation period, we have been a practical, busy people. Five hundred thousand homes have been carved from the wild prairies and nearly fifteen hundred cities and towns have been built of the raw material of the wilderness. Very little time has been spared for aught save empire building, and yet, we have built up an Iowa literature of which we may well be proud, and art and music, with their softening charms, have spread a halo over our home life and character that brings out into overshadowing distinctness, the gentler and more refined attributes of the world's best civilization. Much of this has already found expression in some of the highest works of art, many of which are to be

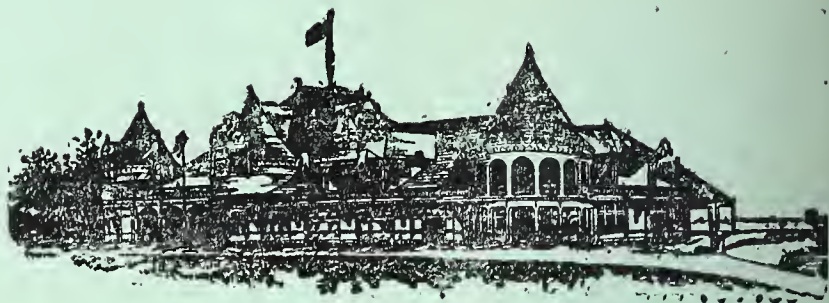
seen in our collection here to day. And who that have heard the thrilling strains from our State band can doubt that music has found a permanent lodgment in our midst.

And now, for the Board of Commissioners, permit me to say that this beautiful structure by the lake was built as a haven for Iowa people visiting this, the greatest of International Expositions. Here is your Chicago home. Here you will find your home literature. Here you will meet a hearty welcome from the Board. Here also you will meet your Iowa friends. This is to be the social and intellectual center of Iowa in Chicago, for the next six months. It is yours, come and possess it.

And now, Mr. President and members of this Commission, in the name of the people of Iowa whom by your courtesy I temporarily represent to-day, permit me to thank you for the zeal, enterprise and labor which you have so wisely expended in the interests of our beloved state. I know that every Iowa citizen will be

proud of this the completed product of your toil and diligence, and will be grateful for your distinguished services. Laboring as you have under the embarrassment of an inadequate appropriation, with consummate skill and loyal patriotism you have marshaled here every farthing of that appropriation into substantial form, endowing it with greater eloquence than the tongue of oratory, where during the next six months it will tell to the people of all nations the simple story of Iowa's greatness. In honoring Iowa, you have honored our common country, reflected credit upon the American name and added new luster to the stars and stripes, the honored and revered emblem of the World's greatest Republic.

And now, gentlemen, thanking you for the distinguished privilege I have enjoyed at your hands to-day, at your request and in the name of the people of the State of Iowa, I declare this building and its exhibits formally opened as Iowa's contribution to the International Exposition of 1893.



IOWA BUILDING.